

It is evident there is a threefold work to be done. (1) The parents have to be trained, (2) the teachers have to be trained (and first among the teachers the clergy) and (3) the children have to be trained.

i. The parents are to be trained. Indifference, irregularity, neglect of lessons, irreverence, wilfulness, misbelief; how often are such things in children merely the reflection of what they are daily in contact with at home. And how can you reach the home better than through children. If parents can be got to the service and catechised through their children, how many things may be brought home to them by the directness of question and answer which they never could have been brought to realize in other ways. Simple things, too elementary for sermons, yet just what people need to learn, the catechising necessarily deals with and forces home. The responsibility of parents for their offsprings religious condition, how naturally and forcibly this may be enlarged upon.

Or even should the parents be absent from the catechising much that will be of practical value may be and will be conveyed to them through their children's innocent report of what has been taught them by the catechist.

ii. Again the teachers are to be trained, trained in sound doctrine, trained in methods of teaching, trained in practical christianity and knowledge of human nature. What better method could be devised for this than the method of catechising. The clergyman thus may impart to his teachers his own mind and spirit and secure increased efficiency; awakened interest; and truer zeal for the children's spiritual good. But most of all as he shapes his questions for others the catechiser will be training himself. His knowledge will grow more accurate; his grasp of doctrine will be strengthened; and his power of imparting truth developed. The vagueness and meaningless generality of mere sermons will be exchanged for terse, simple, clear, clean-cut statements of truth as he is put upon his metal by the answers of those he catechises and by the necessity of correcting their mistakes and enlightening their ignorance.

There are many provisions in these days for teaching teachers:—Teachers' meetings, "Teachers Assistants" i.e., magazines giving a summary of the lessons to be taught. Manuals of doctrine, History, and the like, and all have their value if properly used. But none is more valuable or more reliable than faithful painstaking catechising in the teachers' presence by a clergyman who has first laboriously prepared himself for his task.

iii. But thirdly, or the summing up, of all the children need training. And for this what can be better, to wake them up; to bring home to their hearts the lessons they have learned; to give them system and order; to test their knowledge, to spur them on to greater effort, to correct their misapprehensions, and to fill up their imperfect ideas of truth—than the system of question and answer by a master of the subject? In teaching the children thus we are teaching not merely children, but future parents and future teachers; we are laying the foundations of future generations of sturdy faith and upright practice. And we are taking the position which as clergy we are bound to take as the Chief Teachers and supervisors of the training of our people in fulfilment of the Lord's command.

3. But in this matter of Sunday School Catechising we must be careful not to make the mistake of thinking that the clergyman is the only one who can or should catechise. Questioning the whole school together, which is what is commonly understood by catechising, must of necessity be somewhat general in its effects. And though, as he ought to do, the clergyman should go the round of the school and catechise in turn each class by itself, such visitations could only be made at long intervals. In what I have said above, I have implied what now I wish to emphasize, that the Sunday School should be cate-

chetical throughout. There will, of course, be a wide difference between one teacher's ability to catechise and another's. But each in his degree should be required and taught to be a catechist under the chief cashechist, the clergyman.

This needs emphasizing because teaching in Sunday School is so apt to degenerate into mere hearing of lessons. Sometimes, too, in the laudable desire to interest or to edify their classes, teachers become mere tellers of stories or exhorters. And mere story-telling and exhortation, however good in their place and likely to produce beneficial results when used with caution, are no more to be relied upon as methods of teaching in a Sunday School than in a Day School. It is well, therefore, to remind our teachers, one and all, that their ceaseless ambition and study should be (1) to gain a more thorough knowledge of the Truth and (2) to acquire more skill in questioning that Truth, interestingly, into and out of the pupils' mind.

And if again it be said, no easy task; again I say granted; but all the more should we bend our energies to it. For how can we expect children to learn from us what we do not know well enough to talk intelligently about? If for no other reason, to make the teacher ask himself, what is it I am trying to teach? it were well to require him to catechise!

4. Coming then to the question of materials, let us hope that the flood of Catechisms or question books on all branches of religious knowledge poured upon us on these later days is a sign that this truth about Sunday School catechising is coming to be more recognized. Small difficulty need be encountered now by any teacher honestly desirous of doing his duty in respect to catechising. With such complete and systematic manuals as those of the Bishop Doane series, for example, or with the leaflets and assistants furnished by the Toronto Sunday School Committee, one can scarcely go wrong except it be by relying too much upon the printed help. Indeed the chief difficulty now is not to find but to chose our aids. It were almost a relief if there were fewer. Perhaps these aids should teach us, not only by their multiplicity the value in which the catechetical method is held by the best teachers, but also by their bewildering variety, the fact that every true teacher has his own way of putting things. Be that as it may, they certainly warn us that whatever variety there be as to methods of teaching or ways of putting questions no teacher can teach effectively or question to any purpose, who has not something fixed and definite to teach. Of pretty theorizing and purposeless speculation, as of mere story telling and exhortation, we have had too much. Let the teachers begin to catechise and they will find they must have something real to talk about. Not merely a personal hold on the living Saviour, that of course, but also a body of doctrine and a code of practice simple, definite, objectives which can be taught dogmatically, as being firmly believed. That is what every teacher, who would question well, needs.

It should hardly be necessary for churchmen to ask what? or where? this objective body of truth is! If they do—"whatsoever the Lord has commanded" in His Word through His Church, is the answer. And to churchmen this can hardly be indefinite. It is summed up in the Catechism of the Church; and that with masterly completeness and brevity.

The Lord has commanded men to enter into a covenant of grace with Himself by Baptism: renouncing sin in all its endless variety of form and subtlety; believing the faith once for all revealed in and through His own gracious person; and doing their duty at all cost to God and to their neighbour, seeking help in the prescribed means of grace, specially prayer, and the sacramental system of the Church. This in brief outline is the subject matter of Christian Catechising as set forth by the Church to be amplified and illustrated as need and occasion arise (1) from the Bible,—the sacred Repository of Truth and Treasury of Illustration;—and from

the Prayer Book,—the churchman's authorized interpreter of Holy Writ and Guide to the devout life. The Bible and the Prayer-Book, with the Catechism as its germinal point—these are the Teachers' Text Books for catechising; to be more and more mastered and made his own. To these all other books, however suggestive and useful, are but aids. And all others are to be judged by their ability to help us know these better. The great thing in catechising is to know one's subject. Skill and efficiency in the art must come with practice; and they will.

In conclusion let me say by all means cherish the Sunday School. Labour over it to perfect its machinery, and to make it through and effective in every possible way, from its library well stored with entertaining and instructive books to its rules for the guidance of the Teachers and the discipline of the scholars. But if you are a parent, do not think you have then done all that is due from you in this matter to your children. Lead them to the school. See that they go punctually and regularly, and that they learn their lessons. Watch over their spiritual development yourself. See to it that your life and example at home are in accord with what is taught at school, that your child may never ask as one is said to have done the other day "When shall I be old enough to leave off my prayers like Mamma?" or say, as many do "My father does not go to church or to Communion and he is a good man."

Or if you are a clergyman do not think that because you have set your Sunday School in running order it will go on running and do its work without any further concern or active interest on your part. Watch over it, pray over it, labour for it. Be its master mind, its guiding spirit. You are responsible for its doing good work and if it ceases to do good it may work ill that will last through many generations.

Or finally if you are a teacher do not think that when you have filled your seat and heard the lesson or given a word of good advice you are quit of your duty. Never cease your diligence that by wise, skilful, loving patient questioning—the questions going home to yourself as they are asked of them—you may bring your scholars nearer and nearer the truth. The true teacher, like the true worker in any other earthly sphere, never attains but is ever pressing towards his ideal.

DISESTABLISHMENT AND DISENDOWMENT.

Disestablishment" and "disendowment" are two words often heard in the Church of England to-day. There is a wide distinction between the two and the distinction is clearly drawn by the Rev. Joseph H. Johnson in his lecture on "Ecclesiastical England." Disestablishment if it can come without disendowment, would be an inestimable boon to the Church, setting her free from all state patronage and political connexion, and permitting the Church to make and to enforce her own righteous laws. Disendowment is different. Disendowment is robbery of the Church. It is simply taking from the Church of England funds, which in a former age, were given by her own children to maintain her service. The paying of titles in England to-day, is not, as many people seem to think, a tax which the state lays on the land to support the Church. It is the paying of moderate interest on the Church's own funds which have been invested in this form. Disendowment is the denying to the Church further payment for the use of her own property. It would be an act of the same moral character as that of one who should enter our editorial cellar and help himself to our editorial pork-barrel.—Selected.